

In Your Community

6. Prevent the spread of invasive species while you recreate outdoors.

While you boat or kayak:



Follow the *Clean, Drain, Dry* protocol. Make sure your kayak or boat is clear of any vegetation before entering a body of water. Allow identified boat stewards to inspect your watercraft.

Aquatic invasive species disrupt the aquatic ecosystems, degrade water quality, and can cause costly damage to watercrafts.

While you hike or mountain bike:

Look for Hemlock Woolly Adelgid (HWA) infestations on hemlock trees and report observations. Make sure you don't carry HWA (or any invasive species) from one location to another!



Hemlock trees line the shores of many of the streams and lakes nearby, including Skaneateles Lake. HWA kills hemlock trees, which hold the shoreline in place which prevents nutrient loading, sediment loading to the lake.

7. Share this knowledge, take action, and persevere.

Attend CCE and other group's workshops, trainings, and volunteer events. Utilize agency and municipal resources and guidance. Water is a shared natural resource, and the efforts that go into protecting it must be shared amongst the community for the best results!



Helpful Contacts and Resources for Watershed Residents to Take Action

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Onondaga County
315-424-9485

Cayuga County Soil & Water Conservation District
315-252-4171

Cortland County Soil & Water Conservation District
607-756-5991

Onondaga County Soil & Water Conservation District
315-457-0325

Skaneateles Lake Watershed Agricultural Program
315-457-0325

Syracuse Water Department (Skaneateles)
315-685-6486

NYS DEC Region 7 Water and Wastewater-
(Stormwater, Dam Safety, Flood Control)
315-426-7500

NYS DEC Compliance (Permits) 607-753-3095

NYS DEC Spill Prevention & Response 800-457-7362

This guide was created to help residents take action and was created based on potential impact of action, achievability, available support programs in the watershed and the NYS DEC HAB Action Plan for Skaneateles Lake.

There are agencies and professionals in the Skaneateles Watershed to support you and help connect you to the resources to take action (a few of which are listed above).

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7 Actions for Better Water Quality

A Resident's Guide



Look inside for tips on how to incorporate seven small actions for better water quality

on your property



in your home



and in your community!



Cornell Cooperative Extension
Onondaga County



7 Actions for Better Water Quality

A Resident's Guide

This guide was created to help residents take action on their **properties**, in their **homes**, and in their **community** that will benefit water quality, improve the environment, and even help save you money!*

Check out the list below for what actions you can take and why they benefit and protect water quality.

On Your Property

1. Inspect septic tank every 3 years, have it pumped every 5 years.



2. Use less (or no) fertilizers on your lawn, always test soil first to determine application need.



Nutrients from fertilizer and a leaking septic system contribute to harmful algal blooms (HABs), degrades water quality and soil health, and pose health threats to humans, pets, and wildlife. Regular maintenance of your septic tank is less costly than repairing a failed system.

3. Bigger, better riparian buffers along shorelines and streams.



Riparian means an area adjacent to a stream or lake. Buffers contain native trees and shrubs.



Riparian buffers act as a barrier- their roots

significantly slowing runoff and reducing the amount of nutrient and sediment deposited. Above the surface, leaves slow the rate at which water is falling. Under the surface, roots keep soil in place and prevent erosion and pollution to nearby streams, tributaries, and lakes.

4. Naturalize lawns and shorelines: Keep your grass taller (less mowing too!) add more perennials, keep slopes gentle!

In its natural state, the shoreline area has a natural slope and native vegetation with roots that in its natural state is engineered to protect against erosion. Working against nature can have drastic negative impacts like water quality issues and costly structural damage.



In Your Home

5. Conserve your water use! Turn off faucets when not in use, take shorter showers, use water collected from a rain barrel to wash your car, invest in water saving toilets and faucets.



Reducing the amount of water being flushed and entering drains reduces the stress on your septic system. This decreases the likelihood of a leak and failed system, reducing your contribution of nutrient loading to lake.



If you have a private drinking water well, water conservation in your home can extend the life of the well.

If you are on public water, this may also lower your water bill.

